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ABSTRACT

Primarily intended for the deaf or hard of hearing driver, this booklet contains many tips useful to all drivers. It is divided into two sections: Signs of Car Trouble and What to Do, and Safe Driving Tips and Special Situations. The rationale for section 1 is that a hearing driver can often tell that his car is not running properly or that some part is worn out or broken by the sounds it makes. Topics covered in this section tell the deaf or severely hard of hearing driver how to find out many of the same things through sight and vibrations. Topics include the following: Inspecting the car, lights on the instrument panel, unusual vibrations that can mean trouble, and using the sense of smell. Section 2 is primarily intended for the young deaf driver, whether taking a driver education course or recently licensed with little or no experience in handling different driving situations. Topics discussed in this section include general driving tips, rules of the road, accidents and experiences, and special tips (first aid supplies, winter driving). (TA)

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TIPS ON CAR CARE & SAFETY

FOR DEAF DRIVERS

This booklet is primarily intended for the deaf or hard of hearing driver. However, it contains many tips useful to all drivers.

It is divided into two sections:

Section I: Signs of Car Trouble and What to Do. A hearing driver can often tell that his car is not running properly or that some part is worn out or broken by the sounds it makes—sounds he can hear. As a driver who is deaf or severely hard of hearing, you can find out many of the same things through your sight and ability to feel vibrations. This section tells you how.

Section II: Safe Driving Tips and Special Situations. This section is primarily intended for the young deaf driver—the one taking a driver education course as well as the recently licensed driver with little or no experience in handling the many different situations he may encounter in driving on the Nation's highways.

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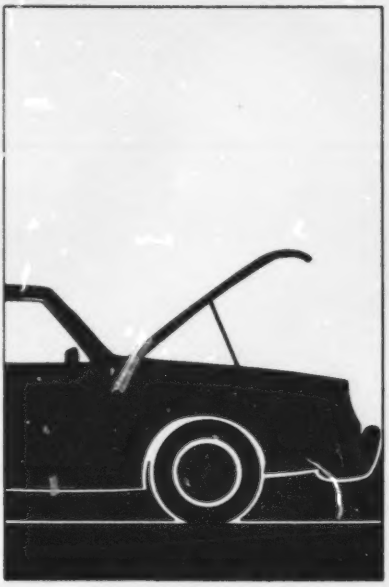

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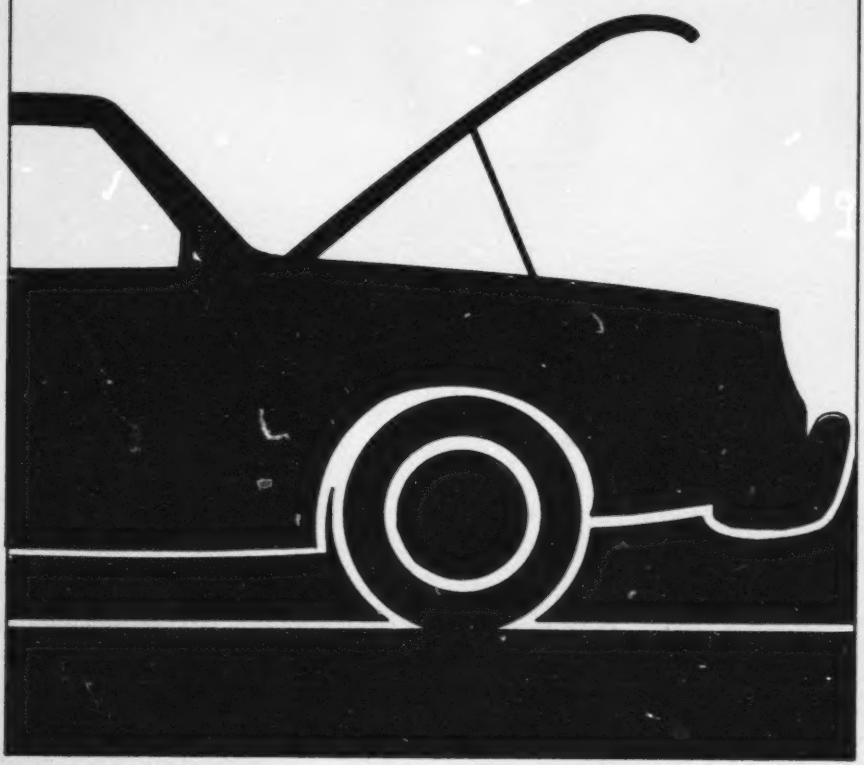
Inspect Your Car



Section I. Signs of Car Trouble and What to Do

This is good advice for all drivers. For you it is more important because many of the things that may be wrong with your car will produce warning sounds—sounds that you can't hear. So for you it is important to use your eyes to inspect for the troubles other drivers can hear.

Your eyes will show you many things—dangerous wear on your tires, worn or frayed belts in the engine compartment, a smoky exhaust, or leaky hoses. Each of these things means trouble if you miss them. Get to know your car. If you don't already know, ask a friend to show you the different places and things to check on a car. Learn the names of the main parts of your car, and learn what these parts do.

The next few pages will tell you about the things on your car which you, especially, should inspect regularly. Use your eyes.

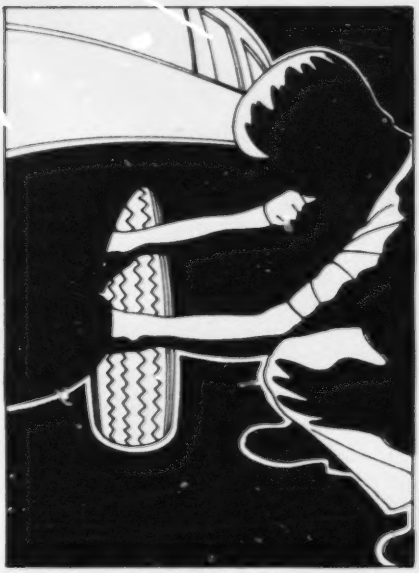
Belts and Hoses

Look at your fan belt and feel it. Make sure it is tight and not frayed or damaged (cut, ragged edges). A loose fan belt or one that breaks while you are driving can leave you with no electrical power for your car. Your water pump will also stop working and your engine will get hot. Check your other belts the same way—the belt on your power steering and the one for your air conditioner, if you have one.

Look at your hoses, too. Make sure the clamps are tight and not leaking. This includes the hoses from your radiator to your engine, the hoses going to your heater, and the hoses on your air conditioner. If the hoses are very soft or if they look brittle or cracked, you might want to replace them with new ones before you have a hose failure while you are driving.

Loose or Broken Wires

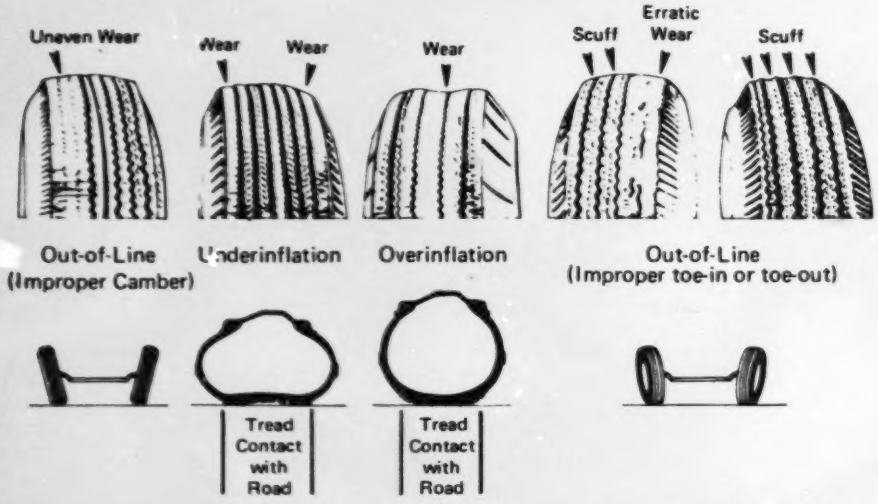
If your car won't start or if it runs rough (vibrates) when it does start, the problem may be in the wires or cables. Look at them from time to time. Tighten those that may be loose and giving you a bad electrical connection. Replace or put tape on wires that are frayed. Reconnect wires that may be broken at terminals (where they are connected to something). Push your spark plug wires down tight over the ends of your spark plugs—sometimes these vibrate loose. Push the other end of these same wires down tight into the distributor cap. If one of your rear lights goes out and the bulbs are still good, look for damaged wires in your trunk.



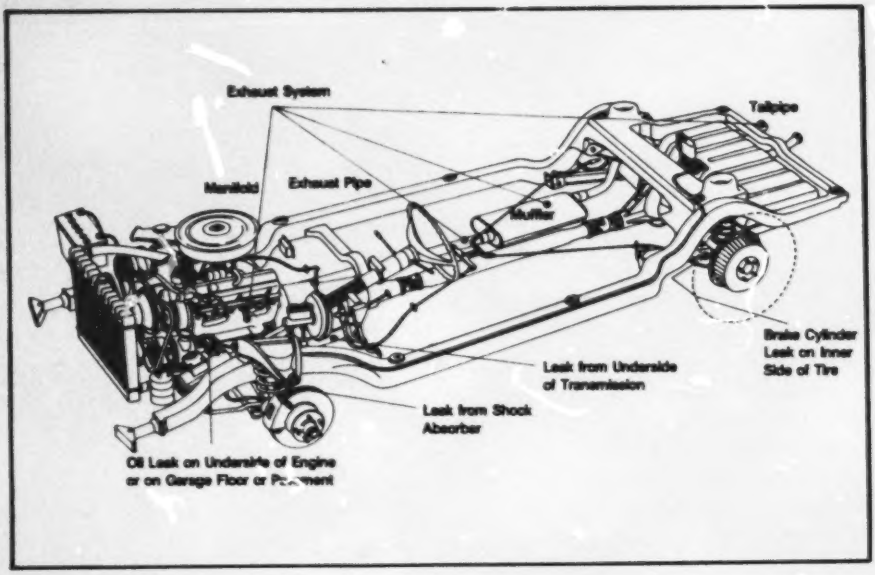
Examine Your Tires

This is very important to your driving safety, and it may save you money. Look for cracks, cuts, bubbles, and places where the

tread may be separated from the tire casing. Look at the tread to see if the tires are wearing out on one edge or the other, if all wear is in the middle, or if the tire is wearing out only in certain places around the whole tire. Uneven tread wear may mean the tires are not balanced, have too much or too little air, or the front end is out of alignment. Also feel the inside of the tires for bubbles or tread separation that is hard to see. If you find anything wrong, get the problem corrected at once.



The tires pictured above are talking to you in a sign language all their own. They're telling you what is wrong with the driver of the car (he put in too much air or not enough), the brakes (they may be grabbing), the shock absorbers (they may be bad, causing the wheels to bounce), or the alignment of the wheels. If you see any of these signs, have your car checked immediately and correct what is wrong. If it's only a problem of air pressure, you can do this yourself.



Tailpipe Smoke

A lot of smoke coming from your car's tailpipe tells you that something may be wrong with the engine. It could be something simple like a carburetor that needs adjustment, or it could be your engine is burning oil and may need a lot of work done on it. Have a mechanic check to see what is wrong.

Other Trouble Signs

All careful drivers inspect their cars regularly. They check all their lights to make sure all are working properly. They check the level of fluids in the engine compartment, including: engine oil, transmission fluid, radiator coolant, battery water, power steering fluid, and windshield washer fluid. And they look under the car for leaks and signs that something is worn out or broken.

Here are some of the trouble signs you may see by looking at the underside of your car or the surface on which it is parked—signs which should tell you to find a good service shop to check out the problem:

- Broken or rusted out parts in the exhaust system (manifold, muffler, tailpipe, catalytic converter).
- Signs of brake fluid leaks on tires or drums.

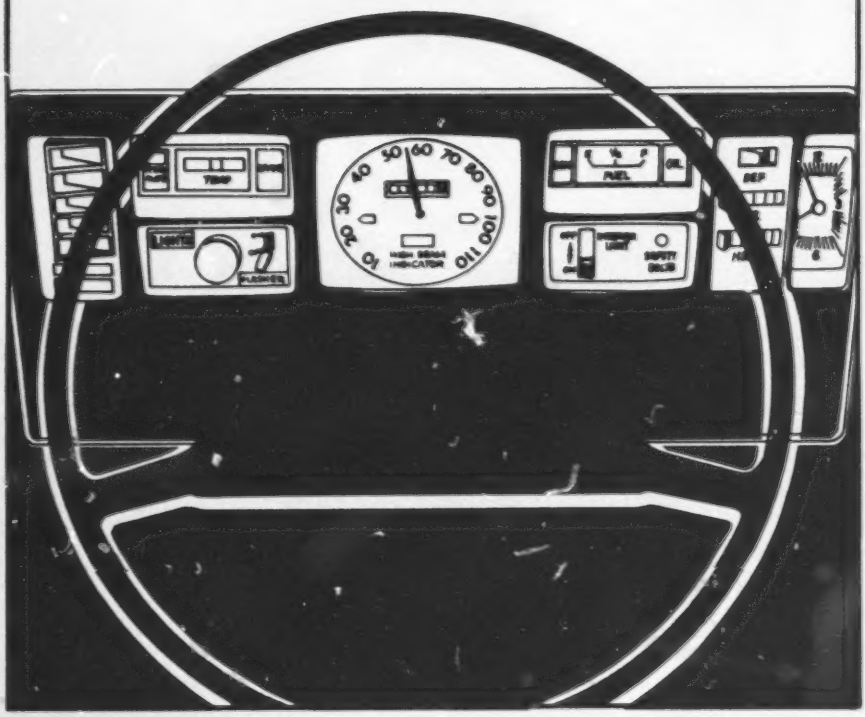
- Parts of the engine covered with oil (look for such signs in the engine compartment also).
- Leaks around fittings and seals.
- Leaking shock absorbers.
- Signs of leaks on the garage floor or other surface where you park your car.

Note: You can usually tell what is leaking by looking at the color and consistency (texture) of the fluid that has leaked onto your garage floor. Fluid from the radiator will look green or rust colored. Oil leaking from the engine is black and heavy. Transmission fluid is light and looks pink in color. A gasoline leak will produce only a light shadowy spot because gasoline evaporates rapidly.

Warning

If your car must be elevated (raised up) for you to work underneath, use jack stands (not a regular jack) to hold the car up. Be careful to follow directions on the jack stand label and make sure the stands are capable of supporting the car safely. Also, whenever you are working under your car it's always a good idea to have someone nearby. If a jack stand should slip or the car should roll, pinning you underneath, the other person could get help quickly.

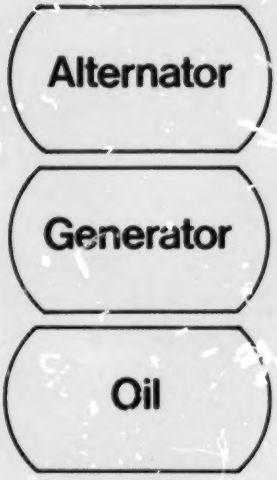
Watch Those Lights



The lights on your instrument panel (some people call it a dash or dashboard) tell you many things about your car. When one of the lights comes on and stays on, you have forgotten to do something, or something is wrong with your car.

Many late model cars have more lights for more things than older cars. The latest model cars may also have buzzers that make a noise if you forget to turn your headlights off or forget to fasten (buckle) your safety belt. Since you can't hear the buzzer, you must watch the lights.

The first thing to do when you get into a car, any car, is fasten your safety belt. A car being driven without safety belts being fastened is an unsafe car. The driver and all passengers should buckle their belts before the car moves. Cars made after January 1, 1972 have a reminder light (fasten safety belts) that lights when the ignition (key) is turned on and either the driver or the passenger in the front seat has forgotten to fasten his safety belt. So, if this light comes on, fasten your safety belt before you move the car, and make sure all other people in the car fasten their belts, too.



Sometimes a deaf person cannot tell when his engine is running after he turns on the ignition (key). This is especially true if he has a well-tuned engine that is running smoothly. He may turn the ignition back and forth to the start position several times before he is sure the engine is running. If the engine is already running, turning the key on again makes a very bothersome noise. Also, this is not good for the starter. An easy way to know when the engine is running is to watch the alternator/generator and oil lights. When these lights go off after you have turned on the ignition switch, the engine is running. If the lights go off, and then come on again, it means your engine has stopped and you must start it again.

The most important reason for these lights is to warn you of trouble in the electrical system of your car or that your car's engine is not getting enough oil.

Oil—This light always comes on as soon as you turn on the ignition. After the engine starts running it should go out. If the light does not go out, you have trouble. You may not have enough oil in your engine, or your oil pump may be bad and not pumping oil through your engine. Don't drive a car that doesn't have enough oil, or you will ruin your engine. If the oil light stays on, the first thing to do is check to see how much oil you have in your engine. Most of the time you'll find that your oil is low, and when you add enough oil the light will go out. If your check shows you have enough oil and the light is still on, don't drive the car—get a good mechanic to check the car because something else is wrong.

Alternator/Generator—Most newer cars have an alternator. Older cars have a generator. Both serve the same purpose. They make the electric current that keeps your car's battery charged and operates your lights and anything else in your car that needs electricity. If the alternator/generator light comes on and stays on, something is wrong with the electrical system of your car. Have a mechanic look for the trouble as soon as you can. You may have a bad alternator generator, a bad voltage regulator, or maybe just a bad wire connection. But you must find the trouble and have the car repaired before you have a breakdown on the highway.

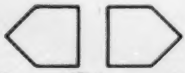
Note: These lights (alternator generator and oil) should light when you first turn on the ignition. They should go out soon after the motor starts. If these lights don't light when you first turn the key, one of the bulbs may be burned out. Such a bulb should be replaced, otherwise the light won't signal trouble when it should, as when you have an oil pressure problem or the alternator/generator isn't working.

Some cars have a temperature light to tell you when your engine is overheating. Others have a gauge. When the temperature light goes on or the needle on the gauge points to "Hot," you have problems with your cooling system. You may have insufficient coolant in the radiator, you may have a leak, or the thermostat may be stuck. Don't drive your car when the engine is running "Hot." Pull off the road to a safe place, wait for the engine to cool, and check the coolant in the radiator (or surge

tank if you have one). Also check for leaks in the hoses. Get the problem corrected.

This light comes on if you forget to release the emergency parking brake. It will stay lit until you release the brake. If you don't, you'll wear out the brakes on your back wheels.

Some of the newest model cars also have a brake failure light. When this light goes on, it tells you that there isn't enough pressure in your brake system. This is dangerous—you might not have any brakes when you need to stop. If this light comes on while driving, slow down, pump your brake pedal lightly, and have your brakes checked and repaired if necessary.



Turn Signals

Your turn signal indicator lights tell you what kind of a turn signal you have given to other drivers. When the turn signals are on, they also make an audible sound that tells the hearing driver that they are flashing—but for you, a visual check is necessary. You must look at the indicator lights on your dash to see which signal is flashing. If you signal for a right turn, only your right turn signal should be flashing (turning on and off). If you signal for a left turn, only your left turn signal should be flashing. If the light does not come on when you signal a turn, or if the turn signal light just glows and does not flash on and off, your turn signals are not working properly. You probably have a burned out flasher or a burned out bulb in one of your signal lights. Get this fixed right away, because without a turn signal other drivers can't tell which way you are turning. Until you get the signals fixed, use the arm and hand signals you were taught in driver education.

Note: Some cars have only one turn signal indicator light, so this light will flash for a right or a left turn.

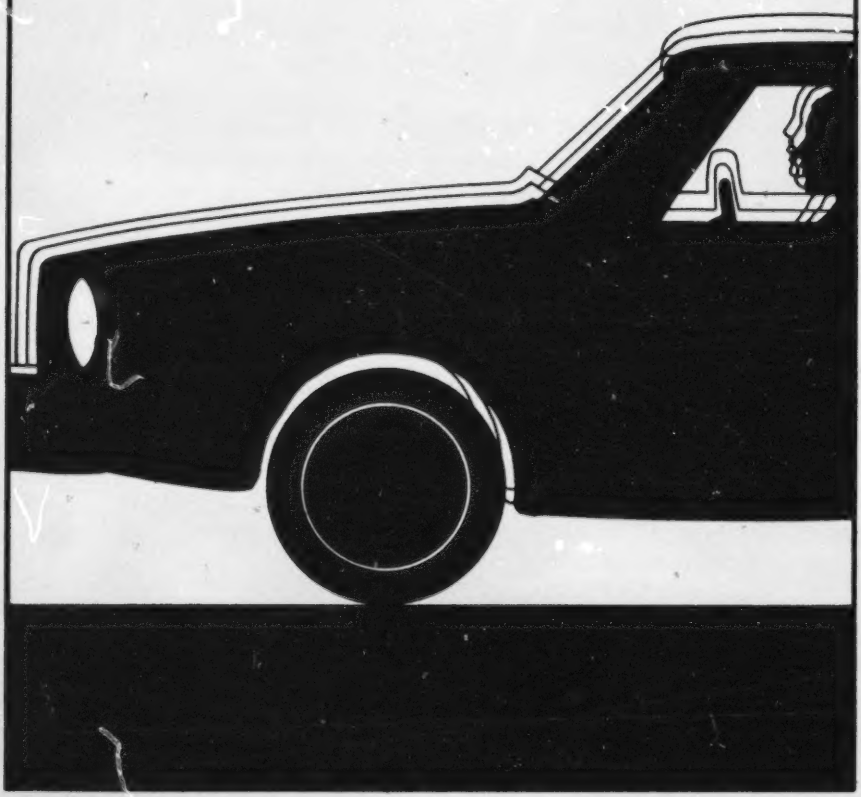
Emergency Flashers

Also Note: When you turn on your emergency flashers, usually by pushing a button on the side of the steering column, both turn signal indicator lights should flash, indicating all your outside turn signals are flashing.

High Beam Indicator

When this little light is lit, it tells you that you are using the high beams on your headlights. This light may be on your speedometer, or in any other location on your dashboard. In most older cars the light is red; in the newer cars, other colors (e.g., blue) may be used. If you are using your high beams, remember to dim them (change to low beams) when another car comes toward you. Also, don't use your high beams when you are close behind another car. If you don't dim your lights, your high beams may blind the other driver and cause an accident.

Vibrations Can Mean Trouble

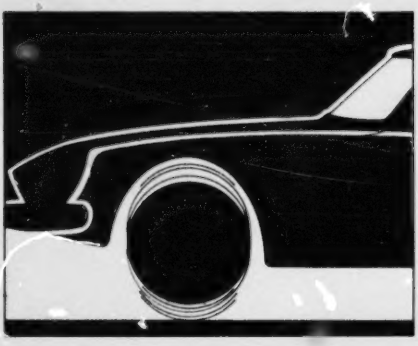


A hearing driver can hear strange noises that tell him something is wrong with his car. When the car is running well, he hears certain kinds of noises that tell him everything seems to be all right. But, many parts of a car make their own special noises when they break, wear out, or are not working properly. For example, a bad wheel bearing or a bad gear in the rear end of the car will make a rumble; a bad water pump will squeal; a bad tire may thump; a loose muffler will rattle; a bad valve lifter will clatter. By listening to what these special noises tell him, the hearing driver can often get his car fixed before it breaks down on the highway or he has an accident.

A deaf driver can't hear those sounds. But, the deaf person can feel vibrations. All cars, even new ones that are working well, make some vibrations that the driver gets used to. So, when a new and unusual vibration is felt, it can mean some part of the car is going bad. You can find out many things about your car by being alert to new and unusual vibrations, and have the problem taken care of before it causes you trouble on the highway, or even worse, an accident. Here are some hints for you.

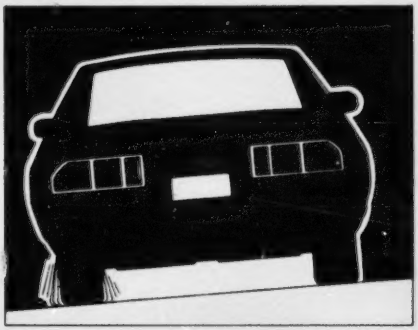
Steering Wheel Vibrations

A vibration (shaking) in the steering wheel tells you that something is wrong with the steering or front end of your car. Have your wheel balance and front end alignment checked. All garages, most service stations, and most automotive service stores can do this for you. If this doesn't take care of the problem, have a good mechanic check the other parts of your steering and front end. Vibration in the steering wheel may signal a very dangerous condition that you should take care of as soon as you can.



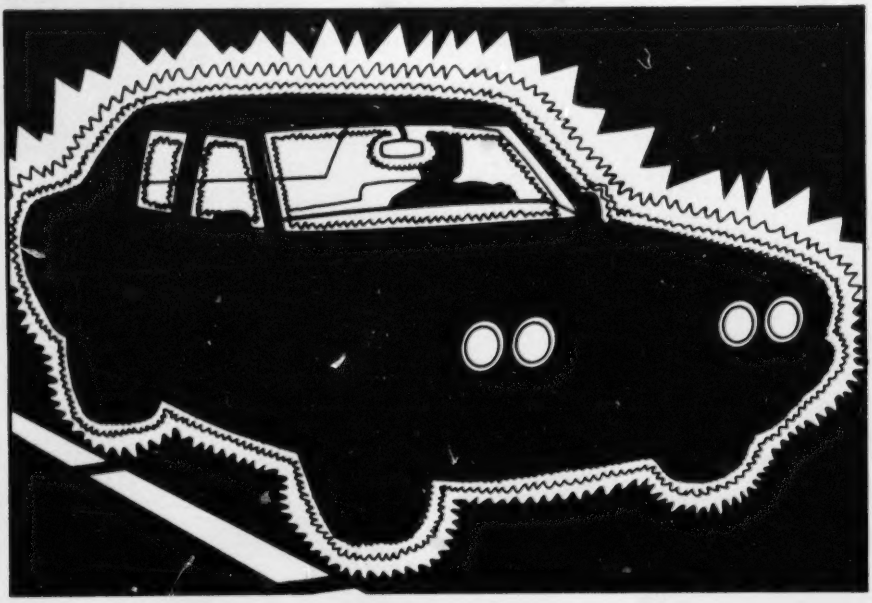
Wheel Bounce

An up and down vibration (bounce) from the direction of any wheel may tell you that you may have a bad shock absorber. It may also tell you that a tire is bad—it may have a flat spot on it; it may have a bubble on it; or it may be out-of-round. Look at your tires yourself, you may see what is wrong. If the problem is not in your tires, have your shock absorbers checked. This problem is dangerous because it can cause you to lose control of your car and have an accident.



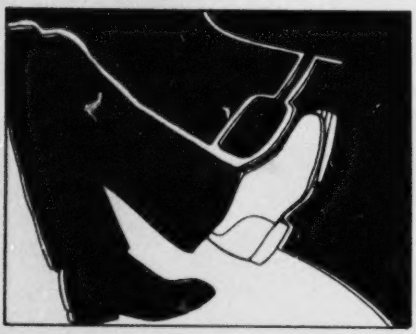
Wheel Wobble

If your car seems to be moving from side to side as you drive down the road, especially if this vibration seems to be coming from one of the wheels, you may have another dangerous problem. It may also feel as though something is pulling and jerking your car to one side or the other. The lugs (nuts) holding your wheel on may be loose. Take off your hub cap or wheel cover and check to make sure the lugs are tight. If this is not the trouble and the vibration or pulling continues, you may have a damaged wheel or axle that should be replaced.



The Whole Car Shakes

If your whole car shakes you may think you have a lot of trouble. But this may not be as bad as some of the other vibrations. Maybe all your car needs is a good tuneup—and all cars need one now and then; or, there may be something wrong with your engine. It may even be something as simple as a loose wire that is not properly connected to a spark plug, making the engine miss. Then again, either the copper or rubber tubing that goes from the carburetor to the automatic transmission to provide vacuum may be broken or shaken loose. The carburetor may need adjustment or there may be dirt in the gasoline. So look into your engine compartment and check for loose wires, disconnected wires or tubing, or spark plugs that are cracked. If you can't find out what is wrong, have a mechanic look at the car. It's hard to control a car that's shaking all over.



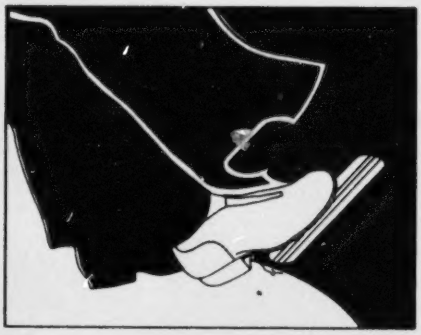
Brake Pedal Thump

If the brake pedal thumps or vibrates against the bottom of your foot when you apply the brakes, something is wrong with your brakes.

If your car pulls to the right or left when you apply the brake, one of your brakes is grabbing, or the air pressure in your tires is uneven. This could pull you off the road or into another traffic lane and cause an accident.

You may even feel more than one wheel grabbing—maybe all the wheels—when you apply the brakes. This may mean your brake linings are worn out and you are doing damage to your wheels.

Have your brakes checked any time you feel something is not right (any unusual vibration) when you push down on the brake pedal. All these conditions can cause accidents.

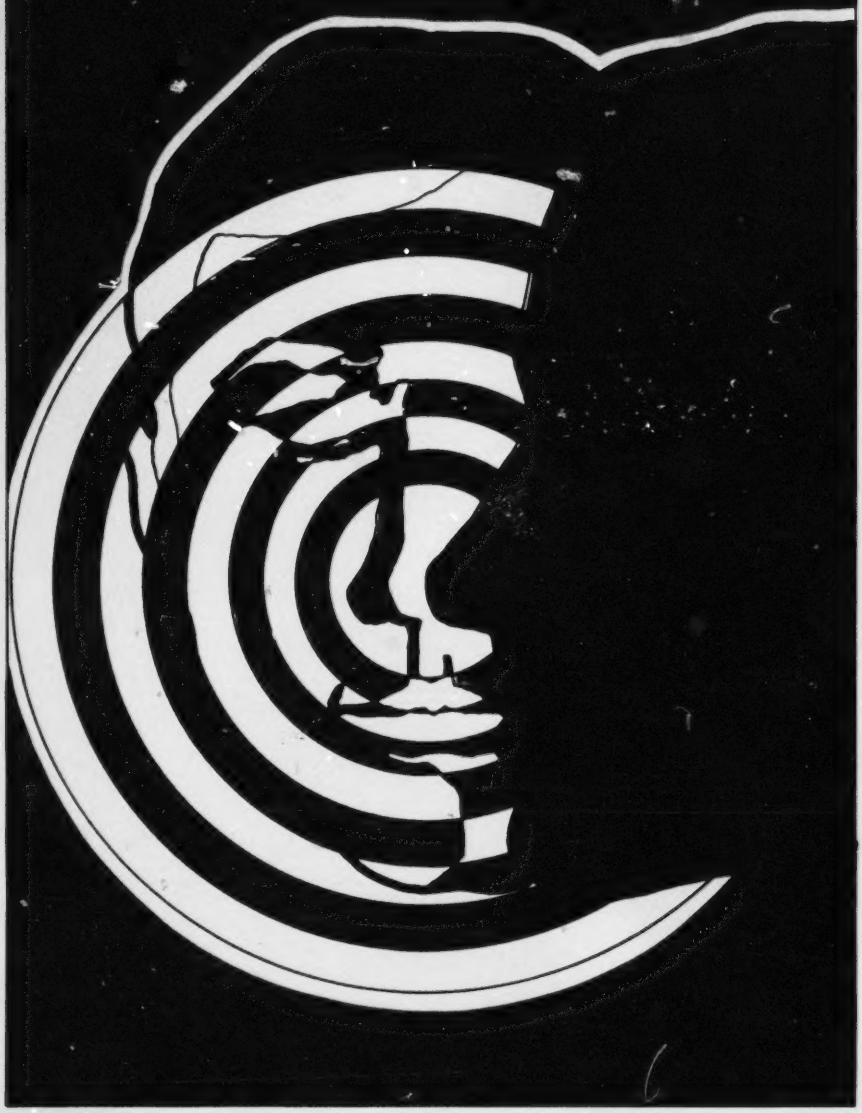


Accelerator Bounce

The accelerator (gas) pedal can also talk to you. If you feel this pedal vibrating (bouncing) against the bottom of your foot, something could be wrong with your car's drive mechanism. You may also feel these vibrations on the floor or in the seat. This, too, is a dangerous condition that should be checked by a good mechanic.

One More Thing...

Don't Forget Your Nose



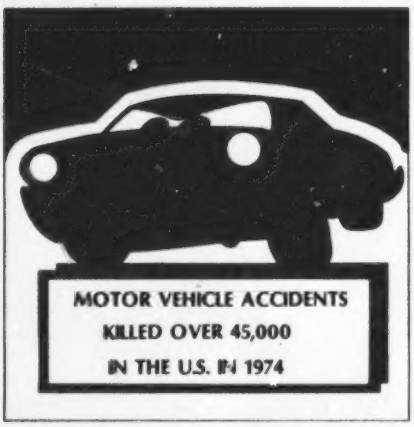
Sometimes you can tell that something is going wrong with your car by the way it smells. If you get new brakes put on your car and they are adjusted too tight, you may be able to smell the brakes when they get too hot. If one of the fittings in your gas line or around the carburetor is broken or loose, you may smell leaking gas in your engine compartment—this should be fixed immediately before you have a fire. If you flood your engine and the car won't start, you can also smell gas. If your engine or radiator gets hot due to lack of water or because something is not working right, you may be able to smell that, too.

Special Tip

This section has told you what you can learn about your car by looking at the lights on your dashboard, by feeling vibrations, by inspecting with your eyes, and even by using your nose. You don't have to be able to hear to tell when something is wrong with your car. But, it's still a good idea to take a hearing friend or relative for a ride from time to time. Ask him to listen for noises that you can't hear and that can mean trouble. He may be able to hear the start of a small problem before it gets to be a big problem that can be dangerous and cost you money.

Section II. Safe Driving Tips and Special Highway Situations

There are a great many people who think deaf persons should not drive; so you, the deaf driver, must prove to them that you are as good a driver as they are. To do this you must learn and practice safe driving habits.



One of the problems with a great many young drivers is that they don't respect their cars. Don't make this mistake. Remember, your car is a deadly weapon. It can hurt, and it can kill. It must be kept in good working order. It must also be operated with care, or it will kill or hurt you and maybe other innocent people, too.

Get to know your car, and learn how to control it and operate it safely. Learn how to recognize possible dange.. ano how to slow down without having to jam on the brakes and come to a sudden stop. Get the feel of the accelerator (gas) pedal so that you'll know just how to press down on the pedal to avoid a stall when crossing a dangerous intersection. Get a feel for your car's power so that you know when you can pass other cars in front of you safely, and when you should wait.

Rules of the Road

There are a great many booklets and pamphlets available on "How to Drive Safely." This booklet is not one of those. But there are a number of points that should be made over and over again, so remember—

- Always wear safety belts.
- Drive within the speed limit.
- Don't drive if you have been drinking or if you are overly tired or sleepy.
- Observe traffic regulations, traffic lights, and highway signs.
- Expect the unexpected. Be ready to stop at any time.
- Learn how to drive safely in bad weather (snow, rain, icy roads).
- Know what to do if your brakes fail or your accelerator sticks.
- Keep yourself and your car in good working order.

Look Right and Left; Check Your Mirrors, and Look Left Again

Because you are deaf, it is very important that you look to the right and to the left and check your mirrors often. This is especially important at intersections. You never know when another car will run through a red light or a stop sign, or when another driver at an intersection thinks he can get across before you get there and stalls his car right in front of you. Also, an emergency vehicle may be coming from a side road or intersecting street.

Looking to the right and left is also important when passing another car or changing lanes on a highway of three or more lanes.

Watch what is going on ahead of you and behind you. Watch for warning lights or accidents far down the road in front of you so that you may be ready to stop, pull off the road, or change lanes safely. Watch for emergency vehicles coming up behind you and for drivers getting ready to pass you. Check your mirrors before passing.

Glance over your left shoulder before passing or changing lanes. Almost all cars have a blindspot to their left and rear. When another car is passing you may not see it in your mirrors when it enters this blindspot. So, check your mirrors, but glance over your left shoulder before pulling out to pass, just in case. And, always drive as if the car behind you is ready to pass you at any time.

Don't Communicate with the Driver

If you communicate through sign language, you know that if you are driving and someone wants to talk to you, you must take your eyes off the road to see what they are signing. You know you can't do this—that you must keep your eyes on the road. So you don't try to communicate while driving. Hearing persons can talk to each other while driving, because they don't have to take their eyes off the road.

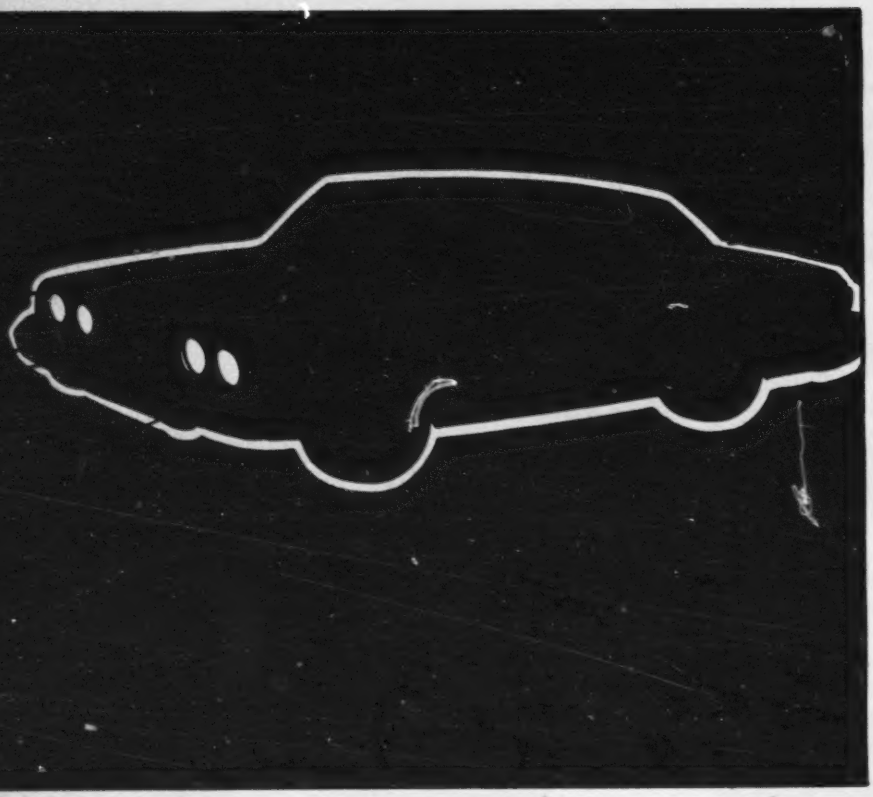
If you are a passenger in a car, whether the driver can hear or not, don't try to talk to him through sign language. If there is an emergency and you must get his attention, do it quickly by gently tapping him on the shoulder and pointing to the emergency (e.g., an emergency vehicle coming up fast to the rear) or by pointing to the side of the road (to tell him to pull over when it is safe because you have something important to tell him). But do this quickly so the driver doesn't have to take his eyes off the road for too long a time.

Be Careful at Intersections

When stopped at an intersection, whether because of a stop sign or a traffic signal, be especially careful before proceeding. If there is a car next to yours waiting for a light to change, or if there is a car stopped at the other side of the intersection and heading in your direction, wait for one of these cars to move before you do—even if the light has turned green. Do the same thing at a stop sign. If there are no other vehicles at the intersection, proceed slowly and look to the right and left before accelerating. This is one way to avoid collisions with emergency vehicles coming up the intersecting street.

Stop and Look at Railroad Crossings

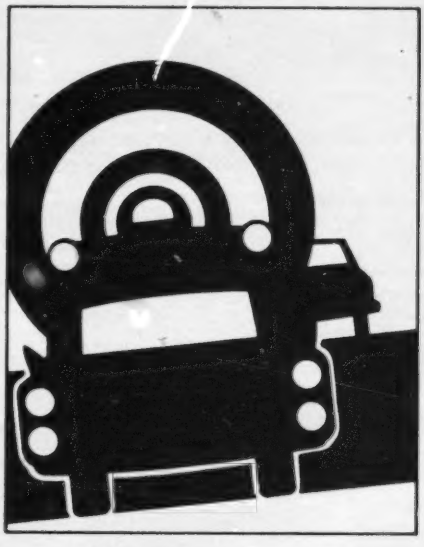
Stop, look, and listen—
Most railroad crossings have warning signs and flashing lights that tell you to stop because a train is coming. Some crossings, especially those on secondary roads in rural areas, have only a sign that looks like a big "X" lying on its side. This sign tells a driver to stop, look, and listen. Of course you can't listen, so you must stop, and look hard and carefully to make sure a train is not coming. Be especially careful when it is dark, foggy, or rainy, and harder to see, and if you see a train in the distance, don't try to beat it—it may be a very fast moving train.



accelerator down slowly and firmly. Don't press down on your accelerator suddenly, or you will spin your wheels.

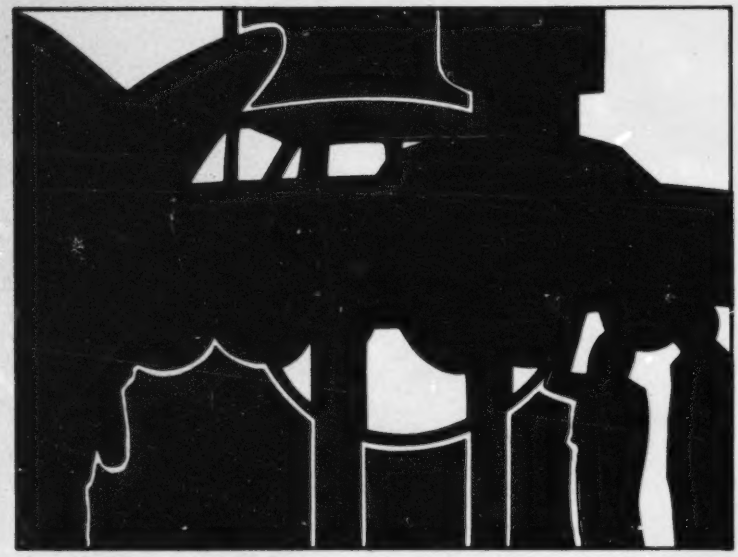
Don't Spin Your Wheels

When starting a car from a standstill on a gravel road or at an intersection where there may be stones on the road, your back wheels may begin to spin if you press down too hard on the accelerator. This spinning results in your car's rear wheels throwing gravel (stones) to the rear. This can result in damage to another car behind you. A hearing driver can hear when his wheels are spinning and throwing gravel, but you can't. Fast starts on loose material may also result in fish-tailing (back end of car swinging from side to side), and this is also a safety hazard. So, you must be extra careful not to make fast starts (sometimes called "jackrabbit" starts). When you start your car forward from a parked position or from a stop at a stop sign or red light, press your



Emergency Vehicles Right-of-Way

Some hearing drivers don't think the deaf should be allowed to drive because they can't hear the sirens of emergency vehicles.



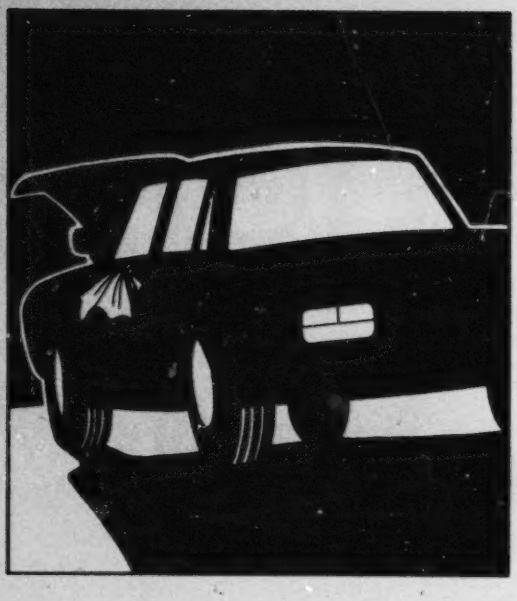
And, there have been times when deaf drivers have been involved in accidents with emergency vehicles because they couldn't hear the sirens. So, you must be extra careful when it comes to emergency vehicles. Of course you know that you must pull to the right of the road when you see the flashing lights of an emergency vehicle behind you, or in front of you and coming in your direction. Ambulances, police cars, and fire trucks have the right of way on the streets and highways when they are going to an emergency. So, by all means pull off onto the shoulder (or as far to the right as possible if there is no shoulder) and give the emergency vehicle room to pass.

Another word of caution: When an ambulance, fire truck, or police car passes, wait for a short time before moving back onto the highway—there may be another emergency vehicle coming right behind the first one.

Keep Your Car in Good Running Condition

Keeping your car in good running condition is very important. You don't want to have a breakdown on the highway. If a hearing driver has a breakdown, he can often walk to a roadside telephone and call for assistance. A deaf driver can't do this.

Have your car checked often to make sure it is running well and is safe to drive. Make sure you check it before you start on a long trip. Take it to a garage, a good service station, or have a good mechanic check it. If you take the time to learn how; you can do a lot of this checking yourself. Section I of this booklet tells you how.



Highway Breakdowns

Any car can have a flat tire or a mechanical breakdown along the highway—even one in good condition. So, for your safety you must know what to do.

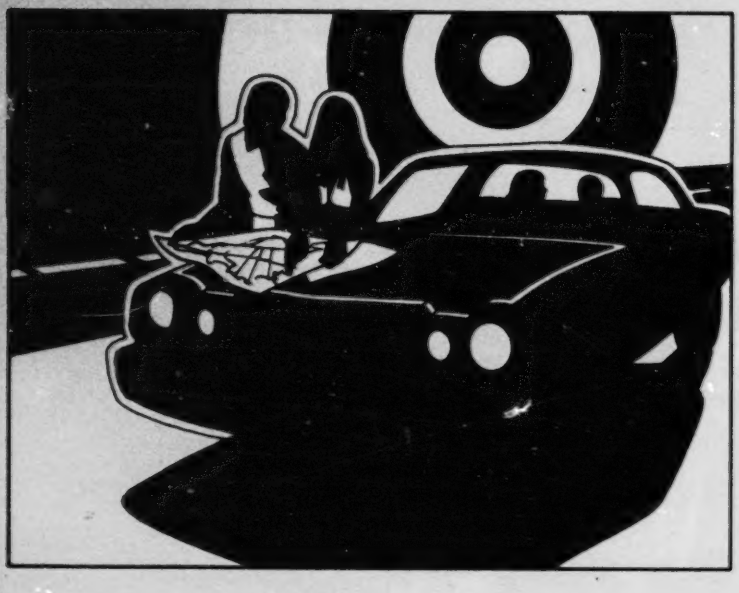
First, pull off the road in a safe spot where you have enough room to park and get out of the car without danger to yourself, or without causing a traffic hazard for other motorists. If you can't pull off the road where you are (not enough room to pull to the side), drive to a spot where you can pull off safely. Do this even if you have to drive on a flat tire.

If your problem is a flat tire, don't try to change the tire on uneven or hilly ground. Look for a level spot. It's better to risk ruining a tire by driving on it flat than to risk having a jack slip and the car fall on you when you are changing a tire.

In some breakdowns, you may not be able to drive off the road. For example, the engine may just quit. In such cases, coast to the side of the road as far as you can, and if the car is still partly on the highway, try to push it to a safe spot.

If your car is equipped with four-way flashers, put them on to warn oncoming cars. Put out flares and warning reflectors if you have them, and put these well to the front and to the rear of the car so they can be seen in time.

When you've taken these safety precautions, inspect your car to see if you can find what is wrong and whether you can fix it yourself. If you need help, raise the hood of the car and attach a white rag or handkerchief to a door handle (or to the radio antenna, if your car has one). This will alert police cars and other passing motorists that you need assistance.



Plan Trips in Advance

Before going on a trip, especially a long trip or a visit to a city where you haven't been before, plan your trip. Know where you are going and how to get there.

Hearing drivers, if they take a wrong turn or go down a wrong street, can stop and ask directions. The deaf driver can't do this. So, get maps before you make your trip. Study the maps to learn which routes you must take and where you must turn off on turnpikes and freeways. If you are going to visit a big city, you may find a street map of this city on your highway map—study this, too.

If you still get lost, your best bet is to look for a policeman or a police station—let them know you are deaf and where you want to go.

Accidents and Experiences

If You Are Stopped by a Policeman

Sometimes the deaf driver will be guilty of breaking traffic laws just like a hearing driver, and may be stopped by a policeman. It may be for speeding, for following too closely to another car, for illegal passing, or for going through a stop sign or stop light. You may even be stopped because one of your lights is burned out, or your muffler is making a lot of noise. Or you may be stopped for a routine traffic check. There may be nothing wrong; the police may just be checking cars for some other purpose.

If a policeman standing beside the road motions you to pull over, do it. If a police car comes up beside you with its light flashing and the policeman signals you to pull over, do it. You can then wait for the policeman to come to your car, or you can get out of your car and go over to him. If you get out of your car, though, be very careful of traffic on the road—remember you can't hear other cars coming, you have to look for them.

First, let the policeman know that you are deaf. Don't reach into your pocket for anything until the policeman knows that you can't hear. If necessary, point to your ears to show him you are deaf. The policeman will ask to see your driver's license and the car registration. If the policeman tries to talk to you and you don't understand what he is saying, hand him your pad and pencil. Don't nod your head; if you do, the policeman may think you understand him when you really don't. If you are a young driver the policeman may want to call your parents, so have their names and address (and phone number if they can hear) ready.

If You See an Accident

Today, many drivers driving along our roads and highways will just keep going if they see a car run off the road and hit a tree, a car turned over, or several cars involved in a crash. There may be people lying on the road or in the cars, badly hurt and perhaps dying. There may be a fire and danger that the car will explode. Still, some drivers will not stop because they don't want to get involved. Don't be like this. If you see an accident along the road and you are the first to see it, or if you are among the first to come along, stop and help. Here are some of the things you should do:

If the car is on fire, try to get the people out of the car, if you can.

Flag down another car if one comes along. Write the driver a note telling him you are deaf, and ask him to help you help the accident victims.

Don't move the accident victim unless it is absolutely necessary for his safety. If you move him, you may injure him more. Leave this for the ambulance attendants who are trained. But, if the injured person is in a car that is burning, if he is pinned under a car and bleeding badly, or if he has been thrown from the car onto a highway with a lot of traffic, you may have to move him for his safety and to stop his bleeding. If you move him, step carefully and only far enough to get him to safety.

If the accident victim is bleeding badly, try to stop the bleeding.

You, or another driver that stops, should put out warning flares or reflectors, especially at night.

Even before you do the above things, consider your own safety and the safety of other drivers on the highway. When you pull off the road to help an accident victim, pull well off the road so that you don't cause an accident yourself.

Finally, if you come upon an accident and there are other people there already helping, don't stop to look—just keep going. Accidents are often caused by drivers slowing down or stopping to look at another accident.

If Your Car Is in an Accident

In your driver education course you learned what to do in case you have an accident. Also, if you have insurance on your car (and you should), your insurance company will often give you a card that tells you what to do in case of an accident. Read this card often, and keep it in your glove compartment so that you can find it easily if you need it. Here are special tips that will help if you have an accident:

Stop another car. Let the driver know you are deaf. Write him a note telling him to call the police (and an ambulance if someone is hurt). Always call the police if your car is in an accident with another car, if your car hits a pedestrian, or if your car hits a bicycle or motorcycle. If you hit another car, the other driver might say it is only a small accident, that the insurance companies will take care of it, and that the police are not needed. Afterwards, the other driver may go to your insurance company or to the police and say it was your fault, even if it was his fault. So, for your protection, call the police if your car is involved in an accident.

Also, remember, the driver of any vehicle (car, motorcycle, truck, or bus) involved in an accident that results in injury or death to any person or total damage to all property of $100 or more shall immediately notify the nearest police office by the quickest means of communication (but take care of the injured people first). Note: The laws in different states vary on when and how to report an accident, so check the laws in the state where the accident occurs.

If someone is hurt, either in your car or in the other car, follow the tips already listed. If one of the cars is on fire, get the people out. If someone is lying in the middle of the road and is in danger of getting run over by other cars, move him to safety. If someone is bleeding badly, try to stop the bleeding. If you have a deaf person riding in your car, make sure the ambulance people know this when they arrive.

Let the other driver know you are deaf, and that he will have to write to communicate with you (unless you are an excellent lip reader and have excellent speech).

When the policeman arrives, let him know that you are deaf. If you need an interpreter to make sure you understand what is being said by the other driver and the policeman, and to make sure they understand you, ask the policeman to use his radio to ask for an interpreter. Or, if you are close to home and if your parents can hear, or if you have hearing friends, get the policeman to call so that someone can come out and help you. You should keep the name of such a person and his phone number in your wallet and show it to the policeman. If you don't need an interpreter or one is not available, use paper and pencil to communicate with the policeman.

If you are on a trip far from home and have an accident, again ask the policeman to get you an interpreter, if you need one. It's also a good idea to carry the name and address (and phone number) of relatives or friends to be contacted in case of an emergency. This information should be in your wallet. If the person to be contacted can hear, he can be reached by phone; if that person is deaf, the police can send him a telegram or they can notify the police in your home town, who can then pass on the message.

For your protection, in case of an accident with another vehicle, there are a number of things you should do for your financial and legal protection:

Get the name and address of the other driver.

Ask to see his driver's license, and copy down the number and state. Also ask to see the registration card of the other vehicle and copy down the name and address of the owner.

Ask the other driver for the name of his insurance company and his policy number.

Give the other driver the same information he gave you (but don't tell him how much insurance you have).

To help you fill out an accident report, copy down the names of the streets or the number of the highway where the accident occurred. Note how many lanes there were, and the condition of the road (wet, dry, icy). Note whether the road was level or hilly, the speed limit in the area, and whether it was a "no passing" zone. Don't forget to

write down the make, model, and year of the other vehicle. Also look at the other vehicle to get an idea of how badly it is damaged and where. After an accident you may be very excited, but you should not forget these things, because they can help you if you have to go to court because of the accident.

Unless the damage is very small and you are sure no one is hurt, you should not let the other driver move his car and you should not move yours. Wait for the police to arrive. The policeman will want to see the position of the cars to help him find out who was at fault. If the policeman tells you to move your car, you can.

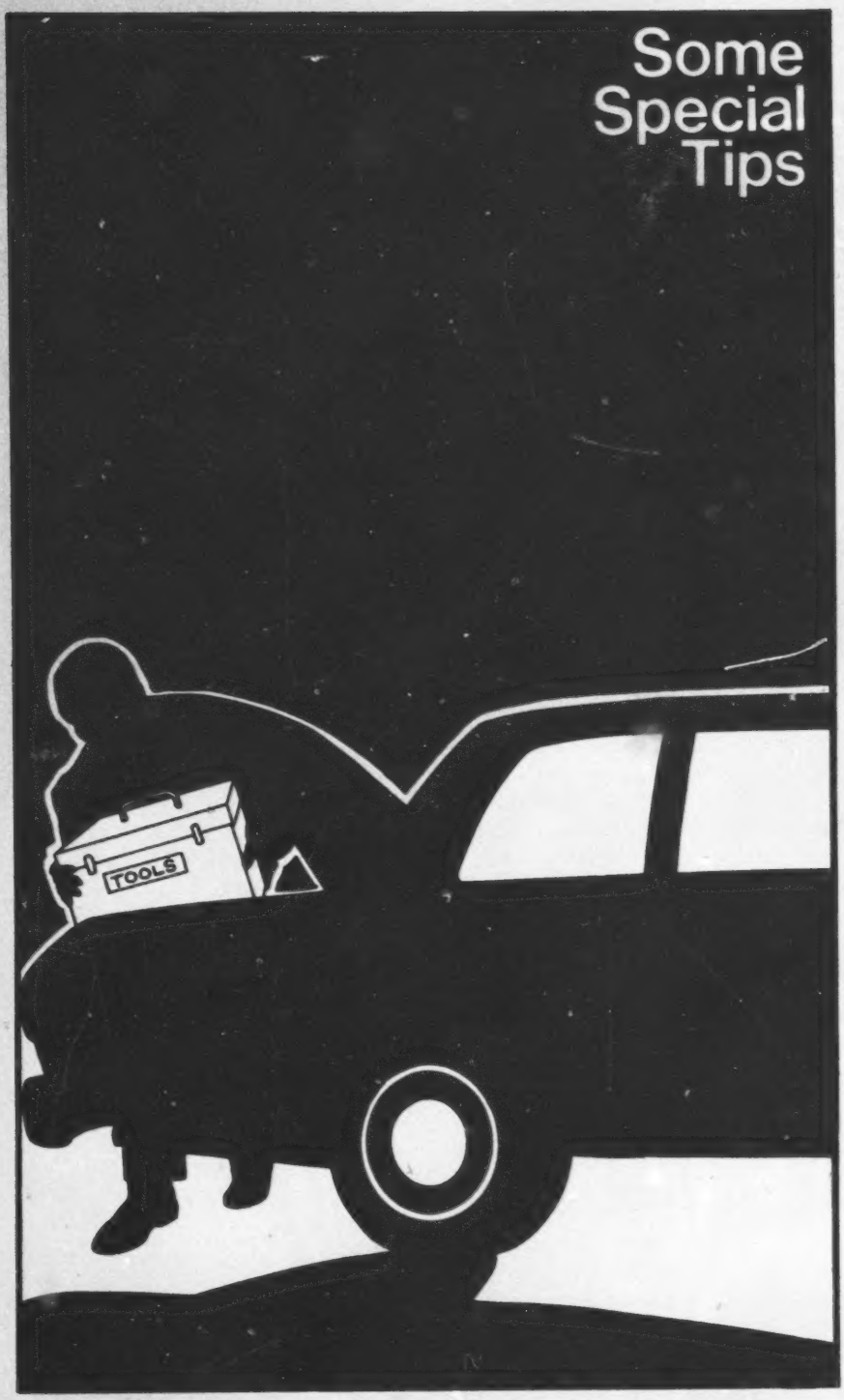
In most accidents (except for those very little bumps and fender scrapes) it is also a good idea to have all the people involved go to a doctor or to a hospital for an examination. This could be very important if sometime later the other driver sues you in court or you sue him.

Carry identification. This is very important, especially if you are hurt and unconscious as a result of the accident and are unable to write to communicate with the police or other persons. Some persons who have medical problems (like a heart condition or allergy to drugs) wear an identification bracelet. You can wear such a bracelet that will indicate you are deaf, and this is a good idea. But, many deaf persons do not like to wear such a bracelet. If you are one of these, at the very least you should have a card in your wallet that says you are deaf, gives your blood type, and tells whom to contact in an emergency.

Notify your insurance company as soon as possible. If someone is killed or hurt in the accident, notify your insurance company immediately. Most companies have a number to call for such emergencies. Since you can't use the phone, have someone call for you.

Also, fill out and submit an accident report to the Department of Motor Vehicles in your state when such reports are required. Forms for filling out such reports can be obtained from the office of local or state police.

Some Special Tips



First Aid Supplies for Your Car

Many times some little thing happens to a car along the road that can be fixed, if the driver has some simple tool or some little thing like a piece of tape or piece of wire. These things can happen to you, and they can happen to a new car just as well as to an older car. For you, it is even more important to be able to fix little things that happen along the road, because you can't go to a phone and call for help.

You don't have to be a good mechanic to fix many of the little things that can go wrong. Your fan belt may become loose because the bolt holding your alternator in position came loose. A hanger on your muffler may break, causing it to drag along the ground. One of your hoses may spring a leak. A wire may become disconnected. You can fix many of these things yourself, and sometimes a little thing like a piece of tape or a spare fuse can keep you from being stranded on a highway and save you the expense of calling a tow truck. Here is a list of some things you can carry in your trunk or glove compartment which you may find useful from time to time:

Necessary Items

Glove Compartment:

- An envelope containing the registration card for your car, an identification card from your insurance company, and the name and address of someone to call in an emergency.
- Spare fuses for your car's electrical system.
- A good flashlight.
- An ice scraper for winter driving.
- A pocket knife.

Trunk:

- Spare tire (with air in it).
- Fire extinguisher.
- Jack and lug wrench for changing tires.
- First aid kit.
- Flares or reflective day/night warning devices.

Very Useful Items

An empty can to carry gasoline if you run out of gas. This can also be used to carry water if your engine boils over or a hose leaks and you lose your coolant. Note: Never, never carry gasoline in this can in your trunk. This is very dangerous.

A box, tucked into the corner of your trunk containing:

Pliers—useful in tightening clamps, small nuts that may get loose, twisting wires.

Screwdrivers—several sizes. Make sure one is a "Phillips" type.

Adjustable wrench (or a small set of open-end wrenches if you prefer)—to tighten nuts and bolts that may have worked loose.

Tape—to repair broken or frayed wires and to temporarily stop small leaks in a hose until you can get to a garage or service station to get a new one.

Wire—often useful to temporarily hold a muffler or tailpipe in place if one of the hangers breaks or falls off.

Rags—nice to have to dry up your distributor cap or wet wires if your motor is drowned out in a heavy rain.

Battery cables—very handy to help get your car started if your battery is weak or run down, especially in winter.

Piece of sandpaper—useful in cleaning dirty battery terminals when the car won't start.

Nuts and bolts of various sizes—a small quantity of these can be useful from time to time.

Spare fan belt—you may never need it, but it is handy if your car's fan belt breaks when you're far from home or out on the open road.

Can of engine oil—nice to have when the oil light comes on and you're far from a service station.

Can of transmission fluid—if your automatic transmission starts acting up on the road because of a low fluid level.

Other Useful Items

Tire pump—when one of your tires develops a slow leak and you'd rather drive to a service station to have it changed than do it yourself. Can also be used to dry out a distributor that is wet.

Plastic sheet—if you have to change a tire in the rain or have to get under the car to check something.

For Winter Driving

Tire chains—if you don't have snow tires.

A small shovel to help you get out of ruts and snowbanks.

A small bag of sand to give you something to throw under your wheels for better traction if you get stuck.

An ice scraper to keep your window glass clean.